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WORLD PEACE AND THE SOVIET MILITARY THREAT

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FEW THINGS in this world are as certain as change, and certainly our world has changed irreversibly since World War II. Yet, as the Frenchman said: *Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose* ("The more things change the more they are the same.").

World peace, for example, continues to depend on American supremacy, and that supremacy is a function of the development and deployment of highly advanced weapon systems. A possibly moot point, in this connection, is the nature of the Soviet threat to world peace. What are the intentions of the Soviet Union? Has our assessment of its intentions and capabilities been realistic? If the Soviets, as a result of their intentions and massive arms buildup, pose an active threat to the United States, will our present stockpile of nuclear bombs and "conventional" missiles be sufficient deterrent to Soviet power? Are the current SALT talks leading to a weakening of American military power relative to the Soviet Union, and, if so, will such a weakening act as a stimulus to Soviet aggression?

These and related issues are discussed in three recent books about the Soviet Union. For a realistic insight into the nature of Soviet thinking, Marshal A. A. Grechko's *The Armed Forces of the Soviet State: A*

Soviet View provides a detailed picture of the worldwide goals and ambitions of the Soviet Union in relation to its military and political policies. William T. Lee, a U.S. specialist in Soviet military and economic affairs, published two similar publications in 1977: *Understanding the Soviet Military Threat: How CIA Estimates Went Astray* and *The Estimation of Soviet Defense Expenditures, 1955-75: An Unconventional Approach*.

Soviet Intentions

The true intentions of a nation can be assessed in terms of its stated intentions and its overt activity. Grechko's work, which was written when he was Minister of Defense of the U.S.S.R., serves as a major source for stated Soviet intentions.† Marshal Andrei Antonovich Grechko joined the Red Army in 1919, took part in subsequent civil war campaigns, and became a member of the Communist Party in 1928. After graduating from the Frunze Military Academy in 1936, he entered the General Staff Academy, graduating in 1941, just as Hitler attacked the Soviet Union. When hostilities ended, he was General-Colonel (three stars) and commander of the 1st Guards Army. By 1953, Grechko was General of the Army, soon becoming Marshal of the Soviet Union (1955). He later became Minister of Defense, Commander-in-Chief of the Soviet Ground Forces, First Deputy Minister of Defense, Commander in Chief of the Joint Armed Forces of the Warsaw Pact nations, Minister of Defense, and finally a member of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the CPSU. Grechko died on 27 April 1976, but his statements

† Marshal A. A. Grechko, *The Armed Forces of the Soviet State: A Soviet View*, translated under the auspices of the United States Air Force (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1975, \$3.20), 349 pages.

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